ADAPTIVE LEADERSHIP AND THE POSITIVE DEVIANCE APPROACH

AICS Palestine mission

March, 2019.

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CONTENT

• The Positive Deviance Approach

• The nature of complexity and complex problems and its implication for leadership

• The Adaptive Leadership Model

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THE POSITIVE DEVIANCE APPROACH
POSITIVE DEVIANTS

In all communities there are individuals or groups, whose unusual behaviour makes it possible to find better solutions to problems than their peers – though they have the same constraints and resources.
WORLD MAP AND PD IN NUMBERS

Total lives impacted: 30 million

Number of projects: 100 +

Number of countries: 50 +
INNOVATION TO END VIOLENCE AGAINST WOMEN IN MOLDOVA
#1: WE FLIP AND ASK IF SOMEONE IS ALREADY PERFORMING BETTER THAN THEIR PEERS
# 2: IF IT IS ABOUT ME NOT WITHOUT ME
# 3 : DISCOVER THE WHAT AND THE HOW
# 4: ACT OUR WAY INTO NEWS
WAYS OF THINKING

Action
Chances
Things
# 5: DATA AND METRICS OWNED AND MONITORED BY COMMUNITIES
Example: user journey of the victim of intimate partner violence

- Constant exposure to the violence acts
- Violence from the side of her spouse
- Silence, shame, hiding from others
- Looking for solution(s) to the situation
- Family not supporting her possible actions
- Friends, neighbors, local officials remind her of family traditions/values
- Extreme act of violence against her and/or child/ren
- Constant fear and shame (dependency, norms)
- Hospitalization (her/child)
- Intervention of police/social assistant/shelter
- Placement in the Shelter
- Psychological, social, legal and economic assistance
- Court
- Separation
- New beginning

- Born in the family with violence
- Marriage
- Constant exposure to the violence acts

Vicious circle
RESULTS IN DROCHIA

Number of survivors

- Jan-Jun: 177
- Jul-Dec: 529

NGO assisted court cases

- Jan-Jun: 8.5
- Jul-Dec: 42

Number of support groups

- Jan-Jun: 24
- Jul-Dec: 38

Number of cases referred by police

- Jan-Jun: 0
- Jul-Dec: 13

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PD in Palestine

1. UNICEF, Palvision: reducing violence in secondary school in East Jerusalem
2. UNDP, Al Fakhoora Dymanic Futures Programme (Gaza): young community leaders
3. UN Habitat: local urban planning committee (WB)
4. UN Women, NDC: Men and boys for gender quality (Gaza and West Bank)
5. UN Women: Decent work – women entrepreneurs (Gaza and WB)
6. UNODC: Youth and sports (WB)
PD in Palestine

- Girls and sports
- Local planning council
- Bullying/violence in schools
- Men and boys for gender equality
- Decent work
- Young community leaders
4 stages in the PD inquiry process

1: Picking the right problem (define)
   • A number of wicked challenges are present and there is a need to (re)frame, so the relevant communities agree on the problems that need to be address during the inquiry process.
   • Formulating an invitation so people can join the inquiry process and considering who else should be at the table.
   • Community members work on defining (reframing) concrete and measurable problem statements and decides what problems to work on.

2: Determining the norm (determine)
   • Mapping typical situations in order to be able to determine the deviant behaviours in stage 3.

3: Discovering the deviant behaviour (discover)
   • “Flipping” the problems and ask if there is anyone, who has behaviours that work well?
   • Looking for social proof.
   • Investigating the “what and the “how” in what these people do.

4: Training and implementing the deviant behaviours (disseminate)
   • Deciding on data points that should be monitored to ensure progress.
   • Acting our way into a new way of thinking by letting the positive deviants train their peers.
   • Leadership training and reflection to ensure sufficient staff support.
THE PD TEST

• The problem is behavioral (somebody doing or not doing it)
• It is possible to work on finding solutions.
• It is doable – structures, legislation, regulative etc. cannot be changed with PD
• The problem is specific/concrete
• The problem is measurable
• We can say “yes” or “no” to whether we experience the problem or not
THE NATURE OF COMPLEXITY AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR LEADERSHIP
### Keith Grint – problems, problems and problems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Critical</th>
<th>Technical</th>
<th>Complex</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Role</td>
<td>Commander</td>
<td>Manager</td>
<td>Leader</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Task</td>
<td>Take decisions and find solutions in crisis situations</td>
<td>Plan the right process, so the problem can be solved</td>
<td>Ask the right questions and invite partners</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Space</td>
<td>Tactical</td>
<td>Operational</td>
<td>Strategic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Time frame</td>
<td>Short</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Long</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Power</td>
<td>force</td>
<td>Calculating</td>
<td>Normative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motto</td>
<td>&quot;Just do it – don’t think&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;I have seen this type of problem before and know a process that can help solve it&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;I have never seen this type of problems before and need a joint assessment of what is needed to solve the problem&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
THE GOOD AND BAD NEWS....

The components of a complex-adaptive system self-organize and new solutions and forms emerge spontaneously.

• Living systems cannot be controlled, but only ‘disturbed’ in order to move in the desired direction.

• Naturally ordered principles exist in the system. In organizations one needs to consider: basic assumptions, deeply rooted values and cultural DNA too.

• If change leaders have an understanding of this, then their adaptive work principles can decrease the need for control, monitoring, follow up and detailed implementation.
THE COMPLEXITY ZONE: THE RALF STACEY MATRIX

Source: Jeff Cohn, Wicked Leadership for Wicked Times, Leading Healthcare in Complexity, p. 56. 2015
OUR MENTAL MODELS DEFINE THE PROFESSIONAL CHALLENGE

Organisations as machines (Industrial society)
People = Human resources

Change involves:
A clear strategy to be executed and disseminated (subject/object),

Leaders and managers are in control – uncertainty equals weakness

Organisations as networks/ecosystems (knowledge society)
People = Human beings
Change involves:
Dialogue, sense-making (subject/subject) and awareness of new positive behaviour emerging

Leaders and managers facilitate something new. Ability to contain uncertainty in a constructive manner is a key strength. In charge but not control...
## CHANGE MANAGEMENT VS. CHANGE LEADERSHIP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Change Management</th>
<th>Change Leadership</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Applicable when</strong></td>
<td><strong>The problem is wicked, i.e. not clearly defined and only partial solutions present themselves</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• There is agreement about the nature of the problem and possible solutions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Focus</strong></td>
<td><strong>Assets and possibilities</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Problem analysis</td>
<td>• Evolving not linear thinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Cause and effect</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Possible actions</strong></td>
<td><strong>Identifying emerging patterns and positive behaviour</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Aligning plans and interventions with strategy</td>
<td>• Disseminating and amplifying positive behaviour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Implementing change by effectively communicating to relevant stakeholders</td>
<td>• Empower relevant networks and communities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Driven by</strong></td>
<td><strong>Peers</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Experts</td>
<td>• Learning and experimentation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Logic</td>
<td>• Already existing solutions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Best practice</td>
<td>• Employees, citizens, leaders on all levels</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pay attention to</strong></td>
<td><strong>What’s already working</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Sustaining a sense of urgency</td>
<td>• What can engage the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Monitoring progress</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted after:
John Kotter: Leading Change,
Keith Grint: Problems, Problems and Problems: The social Construction of Leadership,
Sage Journals (2015)
David Snowden (2007): A Leader’s framework for Decision Making, HBR.
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THE ADAPTIVE LEADERSHIP MODEL
10 ADAPTIVE LEADERSHIP PRINCIPLES

1. Frame the adaptive challenge – what needs to change
2. Formulate vision – create hope for the future
3. Get on the balcony – and out on the dancefloor
4. Give work back to the people
5. Regulate distress
6. Orchestrate conflict
7. Protect the silent creative voices from below
8. Maintain disciplined attention
9. Find partners and think politically
10. Establish and maintain supporting structures

Adapted after Ronald Heifetz and Richard Pascale
THE ART OF ASKING GOOD QUESTIONS

- Open-ended
- Curiosity
- Acknowledge
- Neutrality
- Listen actively
- Pause and see what happens
- Establish trust and confidence
- Avoid being an expert
- Ask for how, what and why people behave like they do
- Beware of pre-understandings
- Sum up along the way
- Repeat questions

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Q’s for discovering PD behaviours

• Who?
• What?
• How?
• With whom?
• When?
• Why?
PD INTERVIEWS

• Ask community members how they see the problems: ‘what keeps them awake at night?’
• What do most people in the community do?
• What does a normal situation/ day looks like?
• How do most people behave?
• What are the usual practices?
• Why do people behave like they do?
• Is there anyone behaving and practicing differently in a more successful way?
• What behaviours already exist that work well?
• What, how and why do they do what they do?
• Ask the PDs to show you how they do things?
• Ask people: ‘who else should be part of this conversation?’
• Beware of and avoid “true but useless” practices – positively deviant behaviours that others cannot learn from.
# Community scorecards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Month</th>
<th>Community Scorecard 2018</th>
<th>Community Scorecard 2019</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>شهري 12</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>4 رجال</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>شهري 1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>شهري 11</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>شهري 10</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<td>-</td>
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<tr>
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<td>-</td>
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<tr>
<td>شهري 1</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
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</table>

Note: The table shows the community scorecards for different months, with some months having a score of 17 and others having a score of 4. The table is handwritten in Arabic.
Community scorecards

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>1</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- جامع النبی (PBUH)
- صلى الله عليه وسلم
- أبابا عامة
- ضريح الغار
PD, M & E and upscaling
M&E at multiple levels

Inspired from Geels, F. W. (2004): From sectoral systems of innovation
Complexity & Measurement

In life and innovation efforts, failure and success are not simple things. In games and sports it is easy to tell who won and lost because:

- Goals are clear and unchanging
- The time and field of play have clear boundaries
- Rules of engagement and scoring do not change in the course of the game
- When ambiguities arise, there is a judge to make the final decision

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# 3 forms of evaluation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Summative</th>
<th>Formative</th>
<th>Developmental</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| • Quantitative  
  • Assessment  
  • Quantitative metrics  
  • Deviation  
  • Cost-benefit  
  • Objectivity  
  • Neutral/ independent  
  • Generalization  
  • Best practice | • Qualitative  
  • Feedback  
  • Improvements  
  • Correct mistakes | • Learning (double-loop)  
  - what works?  
  • Adjustments  
  • Joint ongoing evaluation  
  • Guiding actions and adjustments  
  • On-going decision-making  
  • Emergent interventions |

Based on Patton, M.Q (2011): Developmental Evaluation, chapter. 2
An Innovator’s Fine Balance

Innovators manage in two directions: “vertical” leadership to maintain administrative support for their program; and, “horizontal” leadership to spread their innovation.

Vertical, Hierarchical Orientation

- Participants respond through the chain-of-command
- Participants narrow objectives to solve discreet problems & achieve pre-determined outcomes
- Information flows through formal channels & disciplines
- Individual accountabilities, rank, & job descriptions are emphasized

Horizontal, Network Orientation

- Participants seek out expertise, not rank, in informal social networks
- Participants are reluctant to oversimplify complex challenges, seeking outcomes different and better than expected
- Information flows freely across “territories” & “silos”
- Leaders and followers switch roles easily

Measure, support and balance both views
Progressive Evaluation

Innovators rarely expect stillness. They want an evaluation approach that supports ongoing change and adaptation. Progressive evaluation should:

- Create short-term, flexible goals
- Help stakeholders discover positive deviance (helpful variation) in their organization or community
- Guide creative advances
- Support rapid responsiveness
- Amplify internal accountability to a shared purpose
- Help illuminate what is possible or desirable in this moment in time
- Reveal principles for design and development (not a pat formula or best practice)
Comparing Approaches

Conventional <><><><> <><><><><> Progressive

• Renders definitive judgments of success or failure (often at the end of a project)
• Positions the “objective evaluator” outside the process
• Reveals linear cause-effect explanations or models
• Aims for generalizable findings that apply to other settings
• Maintains formal control of external sponsors as well as blame or reward
• Engenders gaming, fear of failure, and blame

• Making sense of developments & helping to shape unfolding direction
• Positioning evaluation as partnering and team learning
• Capturing novel connections & emerging interdependencies
• Aiming for context-specific insights that inform ongoing innovation
• Positing internal accountability & self-organization
• Supporting hunger for learning and success

Adapted from Michael Quinn Patton, from the forthcoming book, "Getting To Maybe."
Spread Strategies from Kevin Kelly

Science writer Kevin Kelly asserts that the rules for succeeding in business have changed.

- **Embrace the Swarm** As power flows away from the center, business advantage belongs to those who learn how to embrace decentralized, self-organizing activity. Not planned or controlled from the top.

- **Feed the Web First** As networks entangle all commerce, an organization's primary focus shifts from maximizing its “stand-alone” value to maximizing the network’s value. Your fortune rises and falls within its web of generative relationships. Not by investing narrowly in internal capability.

- **Let Go at the Top** As innovation accelerates, abandoning highly successful yet soon-to-be-obsolete peaks becomes the paradoxical role of leaders... as everyone searches for the next peaks to climb. Not defending an old niche.

- **From Places to Spaces** As physical proximity (place) is replaced by multiple interactions with anything, anytime, anywhere (taste-space), the opportunities for intermediaries, middlemen, and mid-size niches expand greatly. Not limiting activity by location or time.

- **No Harmony, All Flux** As turbulence and instability become the norm in business, the most effective survival stance is staying innovative... relying on patchwork strategies at the “edge of chaos.” Not seeking stability.

- **Relationship Tech** As the soft trumps the hard, the most powerful technologies are those that enhance, amplify, extend, augment, recall, and co-evolve relationships. Put connecting people & human attention first. Not investing in technology for

What evaluation approaches bolster distributed control, generative relationships, and non-linear growth?
General Suggestions

- **Measuring at multiple levels.** Consider the interdependent performance of the individual, team, department, and enterprise.

- **Measuring across time.** Single snap-shots can tell you about system performance, but the deeper learning comes when you have a sequence and a story to tell.

- **Selecting a vital few measures.** Complex, relational dynamics repeat across an environment, so you can track a small number of critical variables to see the systemic pattern that emerges over time.

- **Making sense of the numbers together.** Success does not rest in the numbers themselves but rather in the insights that the numbers open up. When you make data available to others, they can adapt on their own in concert with others. Narratives help immensely.

- **Coordinating information flow & exchanges.** Match the frequency, flow, and depth of information exchanges among stakeholders with an estimate of what is required to make progress.

- **Paying attention to surprise.** Even when a measurement system is functioning well, it may miss aspects that become significant in the future. Unfamiliar sources can give you early warning or alert you to an opportunity.
Key M&E questions

- Who needs to know if the initiative is working?
- What kind of information do we need?
- How can we generate the information?
- What will be our indicators for progress?
- Who will generate it?
- How are we going to share that information with the community at large?
- How often?
- Who else needs to be involved?
MORE ABOUT ADAPTIVE LEADERSHIP, COMPLEXITY AND PD

Ron Heifetz on Adaptive leadership:
https://www.google.dk/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=video&cd=1&cad=rja&uact=8&ved=0ahUKEwiy8aKL7pFaAhWJL1AKHV4HCncQtwIIjAA&url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.youtube.com%2Fwatch%3Fv%3DQfLLDvn0pI8&usg=AOvVaw3qfuOO7pEjykGuZm-nr1Th

Snowden on the Cynefin framework:

http://www.liberatingstructures.com
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• Heifetz on Adaptive Lesadership: https://www.dropbox.com/s/tz2i32tp5mnzjmz/Heifetz%20The%20Work%20of%20Leadership.pdf?dl=0
• Developmental evaluation primer: https://www.dropbox.com/s/vg8oagew59qtqew/Developmental_Evaluation_Primer.pdf?dl=0
• Evaluating complexity: https://www.dropbox.com/s/n1zka0pi841cpap/Evaluating_Complexity.pdf?dl=0
• Liberating structures: http://www.liberatingstructures.com
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- Leadership and PD: https://www.dropbox.com/s/ycssauf4a9grv0g/Leadership%20and%20PD%20NL_Vol%2027_No4-Cohn.pdf?dl=0
- What counts for good evidence: https://www.dropbox.com/s/wkw68ovcz7tujj0/What-Counts-as-Good-Evidence-WEB.pdf?dl=0
- Nesta playbook: https://www.dropbox.com/s/047qyb4kpqc5zov/nesta_playbook_for_innovation_learning.pdf?dl=0
- Storytelling: https://www.wiley.com/en-us/Telling+the+Story%3A+The+Heart+and+Soul+of+Successful+Leadership-p-9781118617168
- Design thinking: https://www.press.uchicago.edu/ucp/books/book/distributed/L/bo26296153.html
- Golden rules
- Organizations as machines or conversations: https://www.dropbox.com/s/e16iinxyoom79mq/Suchman%20%20Organizations%20as%20Machines%20%20Organizations%20as%20Conversations...%5B1%5D.pdf?dl=0

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